Philosophy 4
Introduction to Philosophy
Zachary R. Fruhling
Exam #1 Study Guide
Spring 2006 - Cabrillo College

1. What are the three arguments given by Socrates in Plato's dialog "The Crito" for obligation to obey the law. What are the potential objections to these arguments?
2. Summarize Plato's Allegory of the Cave. How is the cave allegory a metaphor for reality? For knowledge? For education? For politics? For Socrates' own life? For philosophy?
3. What is Plato's doctrine or theory of the "Forms"? How does this relate to the philosopher's demand for general rather than particular knowledge? What are some challenges to the forms doctrine offered by Aristotle?
4. Compare and contrast the nature and origin of knowledge on Plato's and Aristotle's accounts.
5. What are the problems confronting scientific induction and classification?
6. What are the central arguments of the "Meno"? Describe the reasoning behind the arguments. Are the arguments successful? Why or why not?
7. What are the various presocratic philosophers' views on the fundamental nature of reality? Be able to compare and contrast the various views, to explain what aspects of reality each view attempts to capture, and to explain the various points for and against each presocratic view on reality.
7. What is the difference between a monist, a dualist, and a pluralist theory of reality, or of "substance"? Be able to offer particular examples of each type theory as well as discuss potential problems for each particular theory you discuss.
9. What are Descartes' two arguments for mind-body dualism. Be able to discuss the reasoning behind each argument as well as the theoretical motivation for offering arguments for dualism. What are some potential objections to each argument?
10. Discuss the differences between Descartes', Spinoza's, and Leibniz's theories of substance.
11. Distinguish in detail between the following general types of arguments for God's existence: cosmological arguments, ontological arguments, design arguments, and Pascal's Wager. What do these argument types have in common? How do they differ? What are some potential weaknesses or objections for each argument type? In relation to the cosmological and ontological arguments in particular, be able to discuss Descartes' specific formulations of these arguments. What objections could be raised to Descartes' arguments?
12. What is a "foundationalist" theory of knowledge? How is Descartes a foundationalist? What is the specific "foundation" of Descartes' epistemological and metaphysical system? How is a "coherence" theory of

knowledge a critique of foundationalism?
13. What is the structure of Descartes' overall argument in his Meditations? Be able to summarize his overall argument step-by-step. Why is his overall argument often taken to be circular?
14. Distinguish between a deistic, a pantheistic, and a panentheistic model of the God/world relation. How do the concepts of transcendence and immanence apply to each of these?
15. What is the Problem of Evil? What are some potential solutions that have been offered to the Problem of Evil? What are the challenges that face each of these proposed solutions?
16. What is Kierkegaard's general critique of various attempts to rationally prove God's existence?
17. Explain in detail David Hume's critique of scientific knowledge. What is his view on causation as necessary connexion? How does he end up as a skeptic?
18. How do Descartes and Hume differ on the origin of our ideas? Use specific examples.
19. What is the distinction between a rationalist and an empiricist theory of knowledge? Offer examples of each.
20. Compare and contrast the following: ancient Greek philosophy, medieval philosophy, and modern philosophy.
21. How does Kant provide a synthesis of both rationalism and empiricism? What is the structure of his overall epistemological system? Use terms such as "things-in-themselves," "the categories of the understanding," "the world of experience," "noumenal," "phenomenal," etc. How is he a transition between modern philosophy and postmodern philosophy? How does Kant's system purport to offer an answer to the skepticism of David Hume regarding objective scientific knowledge?
22. Explain the following Kantian principles: A) Concepts without percepts are empty; percepts without concepts are blind. B) Objectivity equals universal intersubjectivity. C) Kantian idealism entails empirical realism.
23. What is Kant's distinction between the noumenal and the phenomenal self? How does this distinction provide the basis for his ethical theory?
24. Describe Kant's view on the nature and function of religious and theological language. How is this a critique of earlier attempts to prove God's existence such as those listed above?